
Planning Board Overview

(Thursday, 02 September 2004) - - Last Updated (Sunday, 14 January 2007)

The Leonia Planning Board hears applications from Leonia residents and businesses that require substantive zoning waivers in order to complete a construction project, or to open a new business in the Borough.

Planning Board members are appointed by the Mayor and serve without compensation. The Planning Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM in the downstairs meeting room of the Leonia Public Library.

ABOUT THE LEONIA PLANNING BOARD

The Leonia Planning Board, like all planning boards throughout the state, operates under the provisions of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. The Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Leonia Public Library.

Board responsibilities 1. Preparing, adopting, and amending a Master Plan that zones the town for particular types of uses and development. The Master Plan represents the Borough's view of itself and where it should be going.

2. Reviewing for approval proposed subdivisions, site plans, and conditional uses, including certain variances and building permits. (Variances allow an applicant to vary from the zoning requirements after offering convincing legal reasons for doing so.)

3. Performing informal reviews of concept plans for development.

4. Making recommendations to the Borough Council about adopting or amending development regulations.

5. Directing the issuance of building permits for buildings or structures in certain areas shown on an official map, when such building permits also require subdivision, site plan or conditional use approval.

6. Directing the issuance of building permits for buildings or structures on a lot not related to a street, when such building permits also require subdivision, site plan or conditional use approval.

7. Making recommendations to the Borough Council and/or any other governmental authority concerning the relationship of capital projects to the Borough's Master Plan.

8. Participating in the preparation and review of programs or plans required by State or Federal law or regulations.

9. Assembling data as part of a continuous planning process.

10. Performing other advisory duties as are assigned to it by ordinance or by the Borough Council.

Membership

The Leonia Board consists of nine members and two alternates, as required by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. The members are volunteers and serve without compensation. They break down as follows:

Class I: The Mayor of the Borough, or the Mayor's Designee in the absence of the Mayor.

Class II: One of the officials of the Borough other than a member of the Borough Council, appointed by the Mayor.

Class III: Member of the Borough Council to be appointed by it.

Class IV: Six citizens of the Borough of Leonia to be appointed by the Mayor.

Alternates: There are two alternate members of the Planning Board, appointed by the Mayor. The alternate members must meet the qualifications of Class IV members of the Planning Board.

Terms of Office Class I: Term corresponds to the mayor's tenure, or if the member is the mayor's designee in the absence of the mayor, the designee serves at the pleasure of the mayor.

Classes II and III: One-year terms.

Class IV: Four-year terms, unless otherwise provided.

Alternate Members: Two-year terms.

Current members of the Leonia Planning Board:

Title Name

Chairman, Class IV	Tom Toronto	Member, Class I	Mayor Laurence Cherchi	Member, Class II	Martha Lieblich	Member, Class III	Councilman Anthony Puzzo	Member, Class IV	Melinda Dean Aranda	Member, Class IV	Jean Arbeiter	Member, Class IV	Philip Choi	Member, Class IV, Vice Chair	Dr. Paul Poretzky	Member, Class IV, Vice Chair	Stenken	Alternate Member I	Robert Baron	Alternate Member II
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The Planning Board also has an Advisory Committee that works closely with the Board.

Bringing an Application to the Board:

You can find a printable Planning Board Application online, along with instructions on how to fill it out, at www.leonianj.gov. You can also obtain an application and guidance from the Leonia Zoning Officer, Jack Peters, who can be reached at 201-592-5744. The Board Secretary is Laura Schuster, at 201-592-5743. To be heard in a particular month, your application must be available to the public at Borough Hall ten days prior to the meeting date. There are a number of technicalities that must be addressed in making out an application, so be sure to allow yourself adequate preparation time.

For New Business Owners:

The Leonia Planning Board is particularly interested in the appearance of the Downtown Business District. The Board is fortunate in having the volunteer services of a consultant, Jim Rogers, who is expert on signage and design (201-641-8335.) The Planning Board requests that applicants work with Mr. Rogers on the design of facades and signs so as to be in accordance with the Borough's central business district standards.